we will briefly refer. In hysterical paraplegia there is no disturbance in the central functions of the cord, but "there is loss of power over the legs on account of the peculiar ungeared state of the volitional centres, which is at the root of all true hysteric palsy." The various objective indications of spinal trouble are absent; reflexes and sensation are normal; no muscular wasting, no incontinence. With these negative features there may be positive indications of great value in establishing the diagnosis, as the presence of unequivocal symptoms of hysteria; the mode of onset, emotional shock a frequent cause; the development occupies some days, or even weeks; and, thirdly, the character of the weakness, which is rarely absolute. In some cases there are indications of disturbance of the functions of the cord; spinal tenderness, increase in the irritability of the muscles, knee-jerk excessive, and a spurious ankle clonus may be obtained. Owing to the great diagnostic importance of the true ankle clonus it is well to understand the character of the voluntary or spurious form, which may occur in hysterical paraplegia. In the typical true form the clonus begins when the foot is first pressed up, and continues so long as the pressure is maintained; but in the voluntary form "there is no clonus for the first few seconds, then the foot and the observer's hand are pressed down by a voluntary contraction of the calf muscles which is broken by clonus." In persistent hysterical contracture, however, there may be a regular persistent clonus. It is sometimes a difficult matter to decide, as we well remember in a case with many hysterical aspects, in which a diagnosis of organic disease was made, relying on the existence of what was regarded as a true ankle clonus, but after two years' spinal trouble complete recovery corrected the diagnosis. Where there is rigidity of the legs, the question as to whether it is true spasm of hysterical contracture is still more difficult to decide. In the latter the spasm is greatest at the extremity of the limb and is constant, but can be overcome by steady pressure, and the clonus is variable. In spastic paraplegia the spasm is equal throughout the limb, variable in intensity, almost exclusively extensor, and the clonus is uniform. W. O.

ART. XXVI.—*The National Dispensatory: Containing the Natural History, Chemistry, Pharmacy, Actions and Uses of Medicines, including those recognized in the Pharmacopœias of the United States, Great Britain, and Germany, with numerous references to the French Codex.* By ALFRED STILLÉ, M.D., LL.D., Professor Emeritus of the Theory and Practice of Medicine and of Clinical Medicine in the University of Pennsylvania; and JOHN M. MAISCH, Phar. D., Professor of Materia Medica and Botany in the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy. Third edition, thoroughly revised, with numerous additions. With three hundred and eleven illustrations. Royal 8vo. pp. xvi., 1755. Philadelphia: Henry C. Lea's Son & Co., 1884.

THE National Dispensatory was published early in 1879. It was so well received that a third edition has been issued in a little more than five years after the appearance of the first. This fact implies that the quality of the work is highly appreciated, and that it is now a standard of reference well established in the opinion of the medical public, a position which its merit entitles it to hold.

Compared with the first, this edition is much improved, and is enlarged by 127 pages. The length of the page is increased by six lines, and the lines are more than a half an inch longer, so that the volume contains much more matter, probably equivalent to the contents of at least 200 pages of the first edition; and 110 illustrations have been added.

The theme of exegesis here is chiefly the Pharmacopœia of the United States, with the British, German, and French Pharmacopœias, according to the latest revisions. To justly estimate the labor bestowed on this work, we should remember that a pharmacopœia is only a collection of formulas for the preparation of standard compounds selected or devised by competent persons under recognized authority, mainly for the guidance of apothecaries, in which descriptions of constituent materials are limited to diagnostic characteristics, without indication of dose or peculiar virtue of any of them; and that a dispensatory, besides the gist of the pharmacopœias which it expounds, embraces names and synonyms, origin, chemical and commercial history, physical properties, methods of preparation and administration, pharmaceutical uses, effects on living organisms, doses and clinical application of every medicine or compound named in the pharmacopœias, and also of every article, though not recognized in them, that is employed in the treatment of disease. A dispensatory is, in fact, a full summary of materia medica, pharmacy, and therapeutics, a repertory of knowledge in the premises, to which physicians and apothecaries may confidently refer.

The varied and extensive attainments, coupled with painstaking industry and habitual accuracy of statement, necessary to produce such a book, are very rare. In the volume before us, there is abundant evidence that the authors of the National Dispensatory possess all the requisite qualifications for the work, and that they have used them without stint and with eminent success. Seemingly, all English, German, and French authorities in materia medica, pharmacy, and therapeutics, the most recent publications and reports, have been consulted, considered, and judiciously referred to, so that we have presented to us in the account of every article named a summary of what is known or supposed to be known about it at the date of publication.

Without any reason which is now conclusive or apparent, the satisfactory method of expressing the quantities of materials embraced in the formulas of the fifth revision of the Pharmacopœia, 1870, in definite weights and measures, was abandoned, and, in the sixth revision, 1880, a mode of stating quantities in "parts by weight" only, was adopted, much to the dissatisfaction of a vast majority of those who have occasion to make them up. To obviate the inconvenience arising from this source, to facilitate the working of the formulas of the Pharmacopœia of the United States of 1880 by practical physicians and pharmacists, "parts by weight" are translated, in the National Dispensatory, into definite apothecaries' weights and measures, stating also their equivalents in the terms of the metric system, but only proximately. Measures of temperature are stated according to both the Fahrenheit and Centigrade scales, although only Fahrenheit's thermometer is in common use in the United States. This provision of duplicate terms for weights and measures to suit different tastes somewhat mars simplicity of directions, without securing any apparent practical advantage; it merely emphasizes an opinion that expressing quantities in "parts by weight," and recognizing the metric system at this time in the Pharmacopœia of the United States, is premature.

Some optimists may believe that all nations should speak only one and the same language, make coins of the same name and value, and, as a first step towards the wished-for state, that only one unit of measure, of weight, and of temperature should be lawfully employed by all peoples alike; but it will be yet very long, nevertheless, before practical men of the Anglo-Saxon family—the bread-winners—who employ weights and measures in their many daily vocations, as land-surveyors, constructors of buildings and ships, machinists, mechanics, traders—will be convinced of the necessity, or propriety even, of adopting the Centigrade thermometer and the metric system of weights and measures exclusively, seeing that the metric system rests, in fact, on an arbitrary basis, and is not more exact or convenient than any other. Comparatively few Americans are in favor of it. It is conjectured that probably less than ten per cent. of all the physicians and apothecaries in active professional business, including those among us of foreign birth, or parentage, look forward to the introduction of the use of the metric system in prescribing, and into the pharmacist's laboratory, as an improvement fraught with palpable benefit in any sense to either practitioner or patient. The question whether the entire system, standards, and names of the weights and measures in lawful use by fifty millions of people shall be totally changed without lawful authority, is profoundly important. It is made very complex by the multitude of interests concerned, and, therefore, its solution should be confided to our wisest statesmen in authority. Until after the national legislature has determined that the people shall use the metric system, its adoption by any profession or class seems untimely, although statutes of the United States permit its use at this time. If the Pharmacopœia of the United States of America were prepared and published under the direct authority of the government, and it is hoped the next revision will be, it is probable that quantities would be expressed in it only in the lawfully prescribed weights and measures in common use, and in this respect not in advance of the times.

The appendix of the National Dispensatory contains a table of maximum doses; tables of different weights and measures; rules for converting apothecaries' weights and measures into their respective equivalents into metric terms; a table relating to specific gravities of liquids; a table for comparing degrees of the Centigrade and Fahrenheit thermometers; a table of elements, and a list of reagents.

A general index, in three columns, occupies 66 pages, and an index of therapeutics, 34 pages.

In every respect, the work, in all its parts, is well done, and creditable to both authors and publishers. Their enterprise deserves success.

W. S. W. R.

Art. XXVII.—*Traité des Fièvres Bilieuses et Typhiques des Pays Chauds.* Par le Dr. A. Corre, Médecin de 1re Classe de la Marine; Professeur Agrégé à l'École de Médecine Navale de Brest. Avec 35 Tracés de Température dans le text. 8vo. pp. 567. Paris: Octave Doin, 1883.

A Treatise on the Fevers of Hot Climates. By Dr. A. Corre.

This elaborate and learned treatise, written from the standpoint of the naval surgeon, and devoted to the consideration of a group of diseases peculiar to or greatly modified by their occurrence in tropical and sub-